

October 2020



James Montgomery Academy Trust



Dear Parents/Carers,

As this health crisis continues, so do our hopes that families remain safe, especially those who are vulnerable. The messages are clear, we need to be vigilant and protect ourselves and others, following the hands, face and space guidance.

As schools, we have sought to adapt and review our practice regularly as guidance changes. The measures brought in for our full re-opening at the start of term have and will be updated. Our continued goal is provide Covid safe environments. As you are aware, this is through hygiene, minimising social interactions and protecting as much as possible the integrity of each bubble. We sought to optimise the school week, providing required teaching time, whilst still enabling the school to close after Friday lunchtime. This has enabled us, to not only to strengthen the protection around bubble integrity, but also provide extra capacity to respond to staff absence. The challenge all employers have and will continue to face, is absence through self-isolation due to individuals own symptoms or through guidance from test and trace. This has been compounded by the time taken to book and then receive test results, resulting in further staff absence. Schools are no different and across the Trust we have faced significant staffing absence and have really needed the extra capacity we created.

We have had to close bubbles in four of our seventeen schools, and whilst we recognise that this is difficult and worrying for the families affected, it also demonstrates that we are doing well in comparison to other schools. We have maintained our offer and provision in the vast majority of bubbles and hope that we have the tools to meet the challenges in the coming winter months.

In this fast changing landscape there has been a limited ability to involve parents and carers in consultation, however as we move forward, we want to try where possible to do so. I would like to get feedback on our current Friday afternoon plans.

One option, is we continue with the current arrangements, and also to continue to offer childcare where it is required, whilst still closing on Friday lunchtime.

I would request that responses are sent back to school via your child by Wednesday 21st October, in order for us to have a clearer picture of parental views. We have had many parents contact school to support the measures that have been taken and thus we will assume that if there is no reply that you are supportive of this continuing.

Thank you for your continued support

David Silvester
JMAT CEO

Child's Name Year Group



I am in support of the continuing of the Friday afternoon closures during Covid.

I am not in support of the continuing of the Friday afternoon closures during Covid.